SOLICITATION

"Taiwan Environmental Study Tours"

OVERVIEW

I. Federal Agency: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of International Affairs (OIA)

II. Funding Opportunity Title: "Taiwan Environmental Study Tours"

III. Announcement type: Initial announcement

IV. Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 66.931

V. Dates: Proposals must be delivered to EPA/OIA by 5pm EDT on Friday, July 30, 2004. OIA intends to begin this cooperative agreement as soon as possible and to continue it for three years.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. EPA/OIA is requesting applications from qualified not-for-profit organizations and academic institutions for a cooperative agreement to promote sound environmental policy and to build environmental management capacity in Taiwan through study tours, workshops and a conference. The geographic scope of the cooperative agreement is Taiwan and the United States. The total award for the three-year period will be for $295,000, however, initial funding will be for $95,000. Additional, incremental funding will depend upon the availability of funds. Cost-sharing is not required.

B. The project will be implemented in the form of:
1) study tours in the U.S. for Taiwanese experts;
2) workshops in the U.S. and Taiwan for Taiwanese experts;
3) technical assistance in Taiwan;
4) a conference and site visits for Taiwanese and U.S. environmental managers; and
5) courses at U.S. academic institutions for Taiwanese experts.

C. This project has the overall objective to (1) promote sound environmental policy and to build environmental management capacity in Taiwan and (2) strengthen cooperation among environmental mangers in Taiwan and the United States and increase their understanding of environmental problems common to both countries through study tours, workshops, academic courses, and a conference.

D. Descriptions of activities and estimated budgets:

1. Use of Environmental Management Systems to Reduce Waste

a. Format: Study Tour in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: $15,000
First incremental funding: 0
Second incremental funding: 0
c. Expected result: The increased use of environmental management systems (EMS) in Taiwan through greater understanding among the public and business community.
d. Objective: This project will introduce U.S. programs to Taiwan. There has been increasing evidence that organizations that adopt environmental management systems (EMS) for their operations can realize significant benefits in terms of improved environmental performance, including but not limited to environmental compliance, prevention of pollution, increased operational efficiency, and improved relations with regulatory agencies. Originally adopted in the private sector, EMSs are now proving to be a powerful tool that can also help public agencies. EMSs do not impose new technical requirements, nor do they act as a substitute for existing regulatory requirements. EMSs provide a powerful and replicable method for an organization to more effectively manage its environmental obligations and, as a result, improve its overall environmental performance, including areas not subject to legal requirements. EMSs can also help organizations reduce unnecessary costs. Since 1997, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has led a major effort to assist and build partnerships with public agencies, primarily local governments, to voluntarily adopt environmental management systems (EMS) for their operations, using the ISO 14001 International EMS Standard as a baseline. In 2002, EPA launched the Public Entity EMS Resource Center Initiative (PEER) to make EMS expertise more locally available. EPA has selected eight EMS Local Resource Centers (LRCs) around the country, housed in academic and other non-profit institutions that can provide EMS assistance and training for public agencies in different areas around the country. This group includes the Zero Waste Alliance.
e. Details: This activity will consist of a study tour in 2005, including site visits, for approximately three (3) Taiwan official and/or experts.

2. Reuse and cleanup of contaminated sites (Brownfields and Superfund)
a. Format: Study Tour in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: $15,000
First incremental funding: 0
Second incremental funding: 0
c. Expected result: EPAT will transfer lessons learned in the U.S. regarding the cleanup and reuse of contaminated sites, including financing.
d. Objective: The recipient will assist EPAT in studying U.S. programs such as Superfund and “Brownfields” and in applying aspects of those programs to Taiwan.
e. Details: This project will consist of a study tour for approximately three (3) Taiwan officials and/or experts in 2004 or 2005. The experts will learn how the Brownfields and Superfund programs are managed and financed and will visit successful sites.

3. Atmospheric Mercury Monitoring
a. Format: Study Tour in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: $15,000
First incremental funding: 0

Second incremental funding: 0

c. Expected Result: EPAT will better understand how the U.S. monitors atmospheric mercury emissions and how a mercury monitoring station can be established in Taiwan.

d. Objective: The recipient will assist EPAT in visiting a U.S. atmospheric monitoring facility and in meeting with U.S. experts to learn how a similar facility might be constructed on Taiwan. Environmental contamination from mercury has been recognized for decades as a growing problem to humans and wildlife as it readily enters the food chain and is bio-accumulated. The most significant releases of mercury are emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels containing trace amounts of mercury with coal thought to be a major contributor. Mercury is carried around the globe through intercontinental air mass transport and appears in the environment in three forms: reactive gaseous mercury, elemental mercury, and particulate mercury. In a new program to monitor intercontinental transport and deposition of mercury, the NOAA laboratories of CMDL, ARL, and the Arctic Programs Office along with the National Science Foundation and the United States Environmental Protection Agency have teamed up in various combinations to measure mercury concentrations and deposition at the CMDL baseline stations at Barrow, Alaska, Mauna Loa Hawaii, and the South Pole. Established in 1957, Mauna Lao Observatory has grown to become the premier long-term atmospheric monitoring facility on earth. The observatory consists of 10 buildings from which up to 250 different atmospheric parameters are measured by a complement of 12 scientists and engineers. Each full mercury measurement installation costs in the region of $150k for hardware and the same amount to operate for a year inclusive of logistics, staffing, and baseline station facilities.

e. Details: This project will consist of a study tour and site visit to Mauna Loa for approximately two (2) Taiwanese officials and/or experts in late 2004 or early 2005.

4. Constructed Wetlands

a. Format: Study tour in the U.S. and technical assistance in Taiwan

b. Budget: Initial Funding: $15,000
First incremental funding: $20,000
Second incremental funding: $20,000

c. Expected Result: EPAT will have the capacity to construct wetlands to treat primary and secondary sewage effluent.

d. Objective: This project aims to strengthen TEPA's knowledge about U.S. regulations, guidelines, and engineering techniques regarding wetlands construction. This project will assist EPAT in designing and constructing a wetland in Taiwan. Natural processes have always cleansed water as it flowed through rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands. In the last several decades, systems have been constructed to use some of these processes for water quality improvement. Constructed wetlands are now used to improve the quality of point and non-point sources of water pollution, including storm water runoff, domestic wastewater, agricultural wastewater, and coal mine drainage. Constructed wetlands are also being used to treat petroleum refinery wastes, compost and landfill leachates, fish pond discharges, and pretreated industrial wastewaters, such as those from pulp and paper mills, textile mills, and seafood processing. For some wastewaters, constructed wetlands are the sole treatment; for others, they are one component in a sequence of treatment processes. One of the most common applications of constructed wetlands has been the

treatment of primary or secondary domestic sewage effluent. The treatment of wastewater or storm water by constructed wetlands can be a low-cost, low-energy process requiring minimal operational attention. As a result of both extensive research and practical application, insight is being gained into the design, performance, operation, and maintenance of constructed wetlands for water quality improvement. Constructed wetlands can be sturdy, effective systems. However, to be effective, they must be carefully designed, constructed, operated, and maintained.

e. Details: In 2004 and 2005, approximately six (6) EPAT personnel will take part in a study tour of constructed wetlands in the U.S. and meet with EPA and other U.S. experts. U.S. experts will travel to Taiwan to provide technical assistance to EPAT in the design and construction of wetlands.

5. Issues of Common Concern Conference

a. Focus: Conference in the Washington, DC area

b. Budget: Initial Funding: $35,000
First incremental funding: $24,000
Second incremental funding: 0

c. Expected result: Taiwanese and U.S. environmental managers will better understand key environmental issues of common concern and will understand the accomplishments and plans for cooperative activities.

d. Objective: To hold a multi-day event in October 2004 during which environmental issues of common interest are discussed and scientific papers or project reports are presented. The conference will serve as a study tour for approximately ten (10) EPAT officials. During the conference, Taiwanese and U.S. collaborators will review the progress and accomplishments of projects that were implemented during the previous year and discuss plans for the future.

e. Details: This project will consist of conference and site visits for approximately ten (10) Taiwanese officials and an equal number of U.S. experts and officials in October 2004. The recipient will work with EPA and EPAT to determine the date and agenda for the conference.

6. Methane Recovery and Utilization from Landfills

a. Focus: Study Tour in the U.S. and Workshop in Taiwan

b. Budget: Initial Funding: 0
First incremental funding: $20,000
Second incremental funding: $15,000

c. Expected result: EPAT will have the capacity to build a cost-effective system for recovering and utilizing methane from landfills in Taiwan.

d. Objective: EPAT plans to use this activity to advance the introduction of U.S. technologies for small-scale landfills (3-5 ha.) in Taiwan, including research on the feasibility of applying the Bioreactor Landfill Technology.

e. Details: This activity will consist of a study tour in 2004 or 2005 for approximately three (3) Taiwanese experts and/or officials, including site visits, and a workshop in 2005 in Taiwan on methane recovery and utilization technologies.

7. Noise management

a. Activity: Study Tour in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: 0
First incremental funding: 0
Second incremental funding: $12,000
c. Expected result: EPAT will have a better understanding of aviation noise management in the U.S.
d. Objective: EPA will assist EPAT in studying how aviation noise is managed in the U.S., including the monitoring of aircraft noise and noise management strategies, including public participation in the development of strategies. EPAT expects to learn about NASA's Integrated Noise Model and how to apply this model in developing a noise contour map.
e. Details: This project will consist of a study tour, including site visits to airports and communities that have successful noise management strategies, for approximately two (2) Taiwanese officials and/or experts in 2005.

8. Industrial Waste Management
a. Activity: Academic courses in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: 0
First incremental funding: 0
Second incremental funding: $45,000
c. Expected result: EPAT capacity to manage industrial waste will be increased.
d. Objective: This project will train at least one EPAT official in the management of industrial, medical, construction, and agricultural waste. Training will address recycling of industrial waste, including batteries, hazardous waste treatment technologies (excluding incineration), sterilization and disinfection of medical waste, reuse of construction and agricultural waste, and approaches for managing and reducing illegal dumping.
e. Details: This project will be implemented in the form of coursework in 2005 and 2006 at a U.S. academic institution for one (1) Taiwanese official.

9. Soil and Groundwater Pollution Remediation
a. Focus: Academic courses in the U.S.
b. Budget: Initial Funding: 0
First incremental funding: 0
Second incremental funding: $45,000
c. Result: EPAT capacity to manage soil and groundwater pollution will be increased.
d. Objective: This project will train at least one EPAT official in the management of soil and groundwater pollution. Training will address the transport and fate of subsurface contaminants, remediation technologies, pollution modeling, and risk assessment.
e. Details: This project will be implemented in the form of coursework in 2005 and 2006 at a U.S. academic institution for one (1) Taiwanese official.

Section II. Award Information

A. This cooperative agreement will be a one-time award for three years for activities to (1) promote sound environmental policy and to build environmental management capacity in

Taiwan and (2) strengthen cooperation among environmental mangers in Taiwan and the United States and increase their understanding of environmental problems common to both countries with potential funding of approximately $295,000. Initial funding will be for $95,000. Incremental funding will depend upon the availability of funds. All activities that are proposed for initial funding must be able to achieve the proposed results with available funds.

B. Cost-sharing is not required.

C. Funds for this project are made available under an Inter-Agency Agreement between the American Institute in Taiwan and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that has supported environmental activities in cooperation with Taiwan's Environmental Protection Administration since 1993.

D. EPA Substantial involvement shall include:

1) Approval of the recipient's workplan;
2) Approval of the project manger's qualifications;
3) Approval of the agenda for the Issues of Common Concern Conference; and
4) Participation on an advisory committee that will provide advice to the recipient on program direction. In addition to the recipient and EPA, the advisory committee shall have one representative from the Environmental Protection Administration in Taipei. The committee shall conduct its meetings via emails and conference calls. This advisory committee will not be involved in such matters as the selection sub-grantees or contractors but will discuss locations, timing, and objectives for site visits, workshops and study tours.

Section III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible applicants include (1) incorporated nonprofit (or not for profit) agencies, institutions, and organizations incorporated or domiciled in the United States, and (2) public (tribal, state, county, regional or local) agencies, institutions and organizations. Individuals are eligible to apply. Applicants must be located in the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, or a territory or possession of the United States. Not-for-profit organizations described in section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply.

B. There are no match or cost-sharing requirements. However, the degree to which the project budget effectively uses EPA funds and leverages matching funds both will be considered as evaluation criteria. Matching funds can include cash or in-kind contributions. Any dollars counted towards a formal match must be for costs that U.S. EPA can fund. Allowable costs for not-for-profit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87. If the applicants indicate matching funds from sources other than themselves, they should indicate if such funds are committed at the time of application, or when they will become available.

C. Allowable Activities: The proposal must consist of activities authorized under one or more of the following EPA grant authorities: the National Environmental Policy Act 102(2)(F); the Clean Water Act, as Amended, Section 104(b)(3); the Safe Drinking Water Act, as Amended, Section 1442(c)(3); the Clean Air Act, as Amended, Sections 103 and 104; the Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10, the Solid Waste Disposal Act, as Amended, Section 8001, and the Noise Control Act, Section 14(a).

Section IV. Application and Submission Information

A. The applicant shall submit its proposal using the EPA "Application Kit for Federal Assistance." The Application Kit and additional information is available at the EPA Office of Grants and Debarment website: www.epa.gov/ogd

B. In addition, a one-page summary describing how the applicant meets the eligibility requirements outlined in this solicitation should be attached to the top of the application.

C. The "Narrative Statement" attached to the proposal must not exceed twelve (12) single-spaced pages with one-inch margins and 12-point fonts. The Narrative Statement must include a:

1. Description of the project that explains the environmental problems that will be addressed by specific activities and how these activities will achieve measurable progress toward the objective of promoting sound environmental policy and building environmental management capacity in Taiwan and strengthening cooperation among environmental mangers in Taiwan and the United States and increasing their understanding of environmental problems common to both countries;
2. Description of how USEPA and EPAT will be involved in the project;
3. Implementation plan, including a definition of tasks, a time schedule, significant steps, milestones, and anticipated results for each task;
4. Plan that describes how the project will be managed by the recipient. Specific responsibilities of persons who will work on the project should be discussed. Brief biographies, resumes, curricula vitae of the persons who will work on the project may be attached;
5. Description of the applicant's organization; and an
6. Explanation of the budget that makes clear the costs associated with each major task described in the Narrative Statement. (This is in addition to providing the budget information required by the instructions in the application kit.)

D. Environmental Focus: The proposal must focus on the issues, subjects, and activities targeted by this Request for Applications (RFA) and explained under the section entitled "Funding Opportunity Description." The proposal must clearly demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the environmental issues of common concern to Taiwan and the U.S. that are addressed by the project.

E. Applicants should clearly mark any information they consider to be confidential. EPA will make final confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency regulations at 40 CFR Part 2, Sub-part B.

F. Proposals must be delivered to EPA's Office of International Affairs by 5pm on Friday, July 30, 2004.

1) By mail to:

Dan Thompson
Office of International Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
(2650R)
Washington, DC 20460

2) By hand to:

Dan Thompson
Office of International Affairs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Room 31272 Ronald Reagan Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20460

G. Intergovernmental Review: All applicants should be aware that formal requests for assistance (i.e., SF 424 and associated documentation) may be subject to intergovernmental review under Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs."

H. Funding restrictions. Funding is only available for the activities authorized under one or more of the U.S. EPA grant authorities cited in Section 3, Threshold Criteria 2. Funding will not be permitted for construction activity, lobbying, entertainment expenses or other unallowable costs under the OMB circulars. Pre-award costs and equipment costs are allowable only with the written consent of the EPA. Allowable costs for nonprofit organizations are defined in OMB circular A-122; allowable costs for public entities are defined in OMB circular A-87. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31, as applicable. Sub-awards and/or sub-grants must be consistent with the definitions of these terms in 40 CFR 30.2 (ff) and 40 CFR 31.3 *Subgrant* as applicable. EPA encourages applicants to compete subgrants.

Section V. Award Review Information

A. The Office of International Affairs in EPA will organize an evaluation team to review proposals. The team will include members with regional and/or drinking water and watershed management expertise. The team will rank proposals according to the following criteria:

1) 15 percent Expertise and experience in organizing study tours;
2) 10 percent Experience in organizing workshops;
3) 5 percent Experience in organizing conferences;
4) 10 percent Experience working with Taiwanese and Chinese visitors;
5) 10 percent Environmental experience relevant to the project objectives;
6) 30 percent Project design: EPA's evaluation of the proposal will focus on whether the project design has a reasonable chance of achieving the overall goal;

7) 10 percent Partnership Potential: EPA will evaluate the applicant's plans for developing partnerships with other organizations working on related activities;
8) 10 percent Management Plan: EPA will evaluate the applicant's management plan. EPA will evaluate the qualifications of the proposed team and the cost effectiveness of the management plan.

B. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and initial proposals, and to make no award, if it determines that none of the applicants meets eligibility criteria.

C. Potential disputes will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR 30.63 and Part 31, subpart F.

Section VI. Award Administration Information

A. Recipients will be required to provide the EPA Project Officer with a work plan for the initial funding no later than thirty days after the award and annual workplans no later than 60 days before the anniversary date of the award. The workplan shall include all planned international travel by the recipient.

B. The recipient should work most closely with the Environmental Protection Administration in Taipei whose employees are the intended beneficiaries of the project.

C. Activities should be designed with the understanding that USEPA experts are available to provide briefings, lectures, technical training, and relevant written materials for Taiwanese officials who visit the U.S. on study tours or who attend workshops and conferences under this project.

D. Under this cooperative agreement, regular communications through e-mail and phone conferences will be held between the recipient and the EPA Project Officer. Prior to implementing program elements under this agreement, the recipient will have obtained EPA concurrence through approval of the work plan or by other means.

E. Progress reports shall be provided to the EPA Project Officer every six months. Progress reports shall include a brief preview of activities and international travel for the next reporting period.

Section VII. Agency Contact

If you have questions about this solicitation, please contact:

Dan Thompson
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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20460
Telephone: 202-564-6418
Fax: 202-565-2412
E-mail: thompson.dan@epa.gov